



**ANNUAL REPORT
2025 YEAR IN REVIEW**

A LETTER FROM OUR CO-CHAIRS

Grounded in belonging. Focused on what's next.



TechPACT exists to ensure that anyone with a passion for technology has the resources to succeed.

Reaffirming belonging

In 2025, amid growth backlash against traditional DEI efforts, we reaffirmed a core belief: **progress in technology must be rooted in belonging.**

Our work is about creating pathways where everyone who wants to participate in technology feels welcome, supported, and equipped to thrive.

Belonging is not a slogan, it is a strategy.

A pivotal moment ahead

As we enter 2026, we face another pivotal moment. The rapid adoption of artificial intelligence is reshaping work, education, and opportunity at an unprecedented pace. While AI presents extraordinary potential, it also risks widening existing gaps.

TechPACT is committed to ensuring that this transformation expands opportunity, rather than limits it.

AI as an opportunity multiplier

We aim to accelerate inclusion by closing the digital divide through three pillars: awareness, access and knowledge of essential tools. AI is a key tool across all three.

Where opportunity is emerging

AI is driving a circular economy with these entry points across knowledge and trade-based careers that provide sustainable, living-wage opportunities:

- Consumption: Knowledge workers using AI tools to improve performance,
- Creation: Individuals and organizations building and training AI models, and
- Infrastructure: Skilled workers supporting the physical systems that power AI.

"AI should bridge gaps, not widen them."

Looking Forward

- **AI:** We will use AI to lower barriers and create clear, supported pathways into technology careers.
- **Our commitment:** We remain focused on expanding access, widening opportunity, and changing the face of technology.



Michael
Michael W. Smith
Co-Chair, TechPACT



Earl
Earl Newsome
Co-Chair, TechPACT

A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

Why reflection and bold thinking matter for what comes next

The start of a new year is an undeniably powerful moment. As one chapter closes and another begins, we create space to pause, reflect, and reset. The most effective leaders and professionals don't move faster by looking forward alone; they move smarter by learning deliberately from what came before.

True growth begins when we sit and reflect on success and failures. Reflection is a chance to flip our successes into strategic insights and transform past failures into wisdom.

Reflection creates clarity

At TechPACT, reflection led us to a defining realization: access to mentors, advocates, and sponsors is critical but it is only one part of the equation.

The system itself needs reimagining

We identified a fundamental gap in how careers are managed and supported over time. The way professionals navigate growth, opportunity, and transition has not kept pace with the realities of modern work. Transitions, reinvention, and advancement are left to chance rather than intentionally guided.

That gap is where TechPACT will exist

Our work will be focused on building what doesn't yet exist. This proverb anchors our moonshot mindset.

"Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime."

Our goal is not to solve isolated challenges, but to build lasting systems that empower people to earn their way into meaningful, sustainable careers. The platform we are building will benefit all professionals. It will enable them to own the entirety of that career and shape it with intention.



Take Action in 2026

- **Builders:** Join us in creating something new: a platform designed to change how careers are supported over time.
- **Investors:** Help seed a bold idea with the potential to transform career-building at scale.

Whether you're contributing your talent or your capital, this is an invitation to help build something that matters. To learn more, contact me at kimberly@techpact.org.



Kim

Kimberly Saxton
CEO, TechPACT

2025 HIGHLIGHTS

Looking back on the past 12 months



2x

UNIVERSITY
PARTNERSHIPS

Building stronger pathways together

We doubled our university partnerships, strengthening pipelines between academia and industry and expanding access to mentorship, career readiness, and real-world exposure for students pursuing pathways into technology.

3x

STUDENTS
MENTORED

The power of one-to-one support

In 2025, TechPACT tripled the number of students served through mentorship, expanding access to guidance, career insight, and real-world experience. This growth demonstrates how consistent, trusted mentorship helps students with meaningful steps toward technology careers.

20%
MEMBERSHIP
GROWTH

Growing with purpose

Our membership grew by 20%, reflecting growing confidence in TechPACT as a trusted community where technologists connect and contribute to shaping the future of tech.

8000+
INSIGHT
TOUCHPOINTS

Scaling thought leadership

TechPACT Pulse insights were distributed more than 8,000 times, positioning our thought leadership as a trusted resource for leaders navigating inclusion, culture, and ethical technology in an increasingly complex landscape.

Checkout the Special Edition TechPACT Pulse on the next page.

We are deeply grateful to our dedicated volunteers and members. Every step forward in our mission is powered by your commitment. Together, you are helping change the face of technology.

SPECIAL EDITION TECHPACT PULSE

How we search, what we see, and why it matters

Over the past year, TechPACT Pulse has become one of our most trusted leadership resources. Each Pulse is designed to surface research that challenges how we think, lead, and build more inclusive futures in technology.

This edition is especially meaningful as we enter a year where how we use AI, and how AI shapes what we see, search, and believe, will matter more than ever.



The current moment

We live in an era of unprecedented access to information. With a few keystrokes, answers appear instantly, filtered, summarized, and increasingly personalized by AI. Yet new research reminds us of a critical truth: access alone does not guarantee learning.

A recent study, ***The Narrow Search Effect and How Broadening Search Promotes Belief Updating (Leung & Urminsky)***, reveals that how we search may quietly determine what we learn, what we believe, and who gets heard.

In an era of abundant information, our habits and the tools we use shape what we see and what we believe. Not only does this matter for individuals, but also for leaders, organizations, and ecosystems shaping the future of technology.

The narrow search effect

The study shows that people tend to search in ways that mirror their existing beliefs. Search engines and AI systems, optimized for relevance, often reinforce this pattern returning results that align closely with the original framing of the question.

Individuals across diverse topics from health to societal issues, often receive information that aligns with their existing perspectives. Even AI-assisted search tools show the same pattern.

"When search narrows, learning narrows and innovation suffers."

This dynamic doesn't stem from malice or intent. It's human. And when paired with intelligent systems designed to please, it becomes powerful.

SPECIAL EDITION TECHPACT PULSE

How we search, what we see, and why it matters



What the research found

Across 21 experiments using traditional search engines and AI tools, researchers observed a consistent pattern:

- People generate search terms that reflect what they already think.
- Algorithms respond with results that confirm those assumptions.
- Exposure to alternative perspectives is reduced.
- Beliefs remain unchanged, even when evidence exists.

Importantly, when participants were prompted to broaden their search terms, they were more likely to update their beliefs.

This suggests that how we ask matters as much as what we ask.

Familiar searches narrow outcomes

💡 *“Is remote work bad for productivity?”*

Results tend to surface articles emphasizing inefficiency, disengagement, and loss of control, reinforcing skepticism.

💡 *“Why DEI initiatives fail”*

Search results cluster around backlash narratives, overlooking evidence of long-term organizational gains.

💡 *“Does AI replace jobs?”*

Results often skew toward automation anxiety, eclipsing data on job transformation and new career pathways.

💡 *“Are women less confident leaders?”*

Search framing can unintentionally surface biased research, rather than structural explanations or counterevidence.

Each example highlights how initial framing narrows the learning field often without the searcher realizing it.

Action Steps

- Use multiple framings for the same search.
- Encourage teams to surface counterpoints intentionally.
- Design AI systems that introduce perspective diversity, not just relevance.
- Teach digital literacy that emphasizes question quality, not just answers.
- Normalize belief updating based on information received as a sign of strength, not weakness.

Together, TechPACT.